

PRESS RELEASE

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CANAL TOWPATH CLOSED BETWEEN BRADLEY AND KILDWICK

The towpath on the Leeds & Liverpool Canal between Bradley and Kildwick has been temporarily closed as work has restarted on the £2 million Craven towpath improvement project.

The work had been suspended due to the coronavirus outbreak, but contractors are now back on site. However, their progress is being hampered by members of the public ignoring the closure signs and fencing.

Canal & River Trust, the waterways and wellbeing charity that cares for the canal, secured funding for the project from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development with further support from Craven District Council and the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership.

Luke Edwards, project manager at Canal & River Trust, said: "It is really important that people take notice of the signage and fencing. The safety of members of the public, staff and contractors is our primary concern, and it will be difficult to maintain the correct social distancing measures if people ignore the temporary closure.

"We would ask for the public's patience and cooperation while the work is carried out, with closures in place for at least five weeks. Please bear with us and respect the signs and help keep everyone safe. Once complete, the towpath will be back open with a vastly improved surface making it easier for local people to visit the canal and get closer to nature.

"We know that spending time on the canal is good for people's health and wellbeing. Please just remember to observe social distancing at all times – keeping away from other people and moored boats. Cyclists should remember that pedestrians have priority so they should be ready to go slow and give way."

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Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales. Canal & River Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales with company number 7807276 and registered charity number 1146792, registered office address: First Floor North, Station House, 500 Elder Gate, Milton Keynes MK9 1BB

In total, the project will see more than 11km of the towpath in Craven improved, as identified in the Access Development Plan commissioned by Craven District Council and written by Sustrans, to improve accessibility along the Leeds & Liverpool Canal in the District.

The towpath is being resurfaced with a natural limestone material which creates a durable and compact surface. It will be widened at key hotspots, including Gargrave and Broughton Road, to provide better access to and from Skipton railway station and employment sites in the town.

There will also be new 'welcome' and information boards about key points of interest and visitor facilities in and around the canal, and additional waymarking signage to help people find their way onto the waterway. A new canoe portage point in Gargrave will help paddlers get onto the water and enjoy England's first Coast-to-Coast Canoe Trail.

For the latest news and advice about the canal network and social distancing, please visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk

For the latest information on closures, please visit www.canalrivertrust.org.uk/notices and search "Leeds and Liverpool Canal".

Ends

For further information, images or interviews, please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

Project Funding & Background

Canal & River Trust with support from Craven District Council successful secured funds of £1.46m from the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) via the Rural Payments Agency for the project.

In addition, Craven District Council has allocated up to £365,000 towards the scheme, including £225,000 from its New Homes Bonus receipts and £140,000 from the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise Partnership, whilst the Canal & River Trust charity has allocated £136,000 from its budget. The announcement of this scheme builds on the 2016 Department for Transport-funded £450,000 scheme to improve the towpath between Skipton and Bradley.

Canal & River Trust

The waterways and wellbeing charity cares for and brings to life 2,000 miles of canals and rivers across England & Wales. We believe waterways have the power to make a difference to people's lives and that spending time by water can make us all healthier and happier. By bringing

communities together to make a difference to their local waterway, we are creating places and spaces that can be used and enjoyed by everyone, every day.

www.canalrivertrust.org.uk



The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Europe investing in rural areas

The Rural Development Programme for England is a European funding pot managed by Defra that has allocated funding for projects that will create and improve infrastructure for outdoor activities, create and develop infrastructure to enable visitors to move around the area and improve facilities to encourage visitors to stay longer and make return visits.

Local Growth Fund

Local Enterprise Partnerships are playing a vital role in driving forward economic growth across the country, helping to build a country that works for everyone.

That's why by 2021 Government will have invested over £12bn through the Local Growth Fund, allowing LEPs to use their local knowledge to get all areas of the country firing on all cylinders.

Some additional key facts:

- There are 38 LEPs covering the whole of England
- The government has awarded £9.1bn in three rounds of Growth Deals to local areas to drive economic growth.
- LEPs are investing in a wide range of projects including transport, skills, business support, broadband, innovation and flood defences.

Northern Powerhouse

Some Northern Powerhouse key facts:

- The Northern Powerhouse is a key aspect of this Government's approach to addressing the productivity gap in the North and ensuring a stronger, more sustainable economy for all parts of the UK.
- The government has awarded £3.4bn in three rounds of Growth Deals across the Northern Powerhouse.

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